

AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims replaces, without prejudice, all previous versions and listings.

1. (Currently amended) A base as claimed in claim [[9]] 3, wherein the frame has four sides, each side adapted to extend along the four sides of an article with the relatively outer peripheral edge portions of the base positioned adjacent the bottom surfaces of the article.

2. (Previously presented) A base as claimed in claim 1, wherein the outer peripheral edge of each of the sides of the frame is recessed relative to the inner portion of the base along the corresponding side, creating a gap between the base and the adjacent portions of the article along each side thereof.

3. (Currently amended) A base ~~as claimed in claim 9 for supporting an article during shipping, comprising:~~

~~a frame having one or more side edges, each side edge adapted to extend along a side of an article,~~

~~the base having one or more sockets that form receptacles for receipt of the feet of the article;~~

~~a plurality of flexible ribs extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the ribs adapted to deform in response to the engagement with the foot of the article upon insertion into the socket;~~

wherein the one or more sockets define open ended wells in the frame for receipt and engagement of the feet of the article.

4-6 (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A base as claimed in claim [[9]] 3, wherein the ribs in the one or more sockets are vertically positioned and project radially inward from the sidewall.

8. (Currently amended) A base ~~as claimed in claim 7 for shipping and supporting an appliance, comprising:~~

~~a frame having four sides, each side adapted to extend along the four sides of an appliance with the relatively outer peripheral edge portions of the base positioned adjacent the bottom surfaces of the appliance;~~

~~the outer peripheral edge of the base being recessed relative to inner portions of the base along at least one side thereof, the recess of the outer edge along the at least one~~

side creating a gap between the base and adjacent portions of an appliance supported thereon and permitting said outer peripheral edge of the base to deflect upwards without engaging the adjacent portions of the appliance;

one or more sockets defining open ended wells in the frame of the base for receipt of the feet of the appliance to be supported by the base;

the sockets having a plurality of flexible ribs projecting inwardly from the internal sidewall of the well, the ribs extending into each socket to engage an appliance foot upon insertion into the well of the socket, the ribs capable of deforming in response to engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the well of the socket, wherein the ribs are vertically positioned and project radially inward from the sidewall, and wherein the ribs are beveled at their upper edges adjacent the open end of the socket.

9-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A base as claimed in claim [[9]] 3, wherein the ribs are positioned axially within the well of the socket.

12. (Currently amended) A base as claimed in claim 3 for shipping and supporting an appliance, comprising:

~~a frame having one or more side edges, each side edge adapted to extend along a side of an appliance,~~

~~the base having one or more sockets that form receptacles for receipt of the feet of the appliance, and~~

~~a plurality of flexible ribs extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the ribs adapted to deform in response to the engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the socket, wherein the bottom edge of the ribs is separated from the bottom wall of the socket.~~

13. (Currently amended) A base as claimed in claim [[9]] 3, wherein the relatively outer peripheral edge portion of at least one side of the frame is recessed relative to inner portions of the frame along the at least one side, the recess of the outer edge along the at least one side creating a gap between the base and adjacent portions of the appliance.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) A base as claimed in claim 21, wherein the relatively outer peripheral edge portion of at least one side edge of the frame is recessed relative to inner portion of the base along the at least one side, the recess of the outer edge

along the at least one side creating a gap between the base and adjacent the side of the appliance supported thereon and permitting the outer edge to bow upwards without damaging the side of the appliance.

16. (Original) A base as claimed in claim 15, wherein the relatively outer peripheral edge of each of the sides of the frame is recessed relative to the inner portions thereof, creating a gap between the base and the adjacent portions of the appliance along each side thereof.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A base for shipping and supporting an appliance of the type having an internal structural frame and at least one outer skin panel portion attached thereto, the base comprising:

a frame having one or more side edges adapted to extend adjacent one or more sides of the structural frame portion or outer skin panel portion of the appliance,

the relatively outer peripheral edge portion of at least one side edge of the frame being recessed relative to inner portion of the base along the at least one side, the recess of the outer edge along the at least one side creating a gap between the base and adjacent structural frame or skin panel portion of the appliance supported thereon and permitting the outer edge to bow upwards without damaging the adjacent structural frame or skin panel portion of the appliance,

one or more sockets in the frame that define open ended wells form receptacles for receipt of the feet of the appliance, and

a plurality of flexible ribs extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the ribs adapted to deform in response to the engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the socket, wherein the ribs are beveled adjacent the upper edge of the socket to facilitate insertion of the foot of the appliance into the socket.

19. (Previously presented) A base as claimed in claim 21, wherein the ribs are positioned axially within the well of the socket.

20. (Currently amended) A base for shipping and supporting an appliance of the type having an internal structural frame and at least one outer skin panel portion attached thereto, the base comprising:

a frame having one or more side edges adapted to extend adjacent one or more sides of the structural frame portion or outer skin panel portion of the appliance,

the relatively outer peripheral edge portion of at least one side edge of the frame being recessed relative to inner portion of the base along the at least one side, the recess of the outer edge along the at least one side creating a gap between the base and adjacent structural frame or skin panel portion of the appliance supported thereon and permitting the outer edge to bow upwards without damaging the adjacent structural frame or skin panel portion of the appliance,

one or more sockets in the frame that define open ended wells forming ~~form~~ receptacles for receipt of the feet of the appliance, and

a plurality of flexible ribs extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the ribs adapted to deform in response to the engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the socket, wherein the bottom edges of the ribs are separated from the bottom wall of the socket.

21. (Currently amended) A base for shipping and supporting an appliance, comprising:

a frame having one or more side edges, each side edge adapted to extend along a side of an appliance,

the base having one or more sockets that define open ended wells ~~form~~ receptacles for receipt of the feet of the appliance;

a plurality of flexible ribs extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the ribs adapted to deform in response to the engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the socket to grip the foot of the appliance in the socket to maintain the appliance and the base together.

22. (Currently amended) A base for shipping and supporting an appliance, comprising:

a frame having one or more side edges, each side edge adapted to extend along a side of an appliance,

the base having one or more sockets that define open ended wells ~~form~~ receptacles for receipt of the feet of the appliance;

a plurality of flexible fins extending along the internal sidewall of the socket and projecting inwardly into the well of the socket, the fins adapted to deflect sideways in response to the engagement with the foot of the appliance upon insertion into the socket.

23. (Previously presented) A base as claimed in claim 21, wherein the ribs are beveled adjacent the upper edge of the socket to facilitate insertion of the foot of the appliance into the socket.

24. (Previously presented) A base as claimed in claim 21, wherein the bottom edges of the ribs are separated from the bottom wall of the socket.